





**You,  
The Artist**

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## Introduction

If you are reading this book, you are probably someone struggling with the complexity of the art world's main issues.

Maybe you have seen some YouTube videos about the negative aspects of contemporary art and are seeking for less biased and broader information on this subject. This book tries to summarise all the things you will need - from art history to the shift to Conceptual art, but always with

a practical view - in order to help you to be your best as a beginner-artist- guide. I don't need to explain the allure of art to you –hopefully, you feel that irresistible call already, and it's a very strong call indeed.

Don't try to explain your passion to anyone – just do everything you can to transform it into a daily activity. That is the only goal of this book.

Congratulations for being such a creative and inspiring human being.

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# ONE. **You, the Artist**

1\_1. The artist mindset

1\_2. Goals

1\_3. Mentors

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## 1\_1. The artist mindset

I want to talk about the artist mindset to you. There are three areas to consider:

**First:** the individual approach: are you an artist?

**Second:** the social view, or how others see you as an artist;

**Third:** the way you react to this and the way you see yourself in the first place, what kind of artist you want to be.

So, let's go:

**First phase:** Individual: Are you (really) an artist? If your answer is 'yes', I would say, you *should* be these things::

. To be Introspective, to think a lot, to *talk* all the time to yourself, to be kind of isolated;

. To be a Dreamer: one of the *things* an artist does, is to dream a lot, and to have a kind heart;

. To be Idealistic: you must have high hopes for mankind, to be always optimistic about the human soul.

. To be Creative: for each problem

you are able to find several solutions;

. To be a DIY (do it yourself) person, that likes the craftsmanship involved in the creation of art.

**Second phase:** The social, romantic notion. Artists are criticised for having their heads in the clouds. They are said to be unrealistic, too idealistic, they say; mthen there is the myth of the starving artist; an artist is this person unable to earn his living; from Van Gogh, Modigliani, Gauguin, came the *damn artist*

concept, someone who is disturbed and disorganised, someone that is outside the social order and cannot do anything right, the way it should be done; a waste of time for everyone they come into contact with.

**Third Phase** then there is you, the artist. And you, the artist, must defy this notion of the *damn artist*. And you will defy this notion only if you achieve a balance, only if you prove them wrong about each and every erroneous idea they have about being an artist.

This can be achieved in five easy steps:

**One:** be realistic about what you can do and achieve;

**Second:** earn money on your own terms;

**Third:** be polite to everyone;

**Fourth:** feel okay about being an artist, in your own skin;

**Fifth:** organise your daily activity in a clear and simple way.

And there you go. Keep this in mind: you are an artist. It is your activity. Keep being professional all



the time and people will respect you  
and will also respect your work.

## 1\_2. Goals

Well, there are three main goals that an artist may have:

**One:** To be a star.

**Two:** just to be successful.

**Three:** to be himself or herself.

**One:** To be a star: usually this kind of artist has big gallery dreams, intends to be a popular artist and to get rich through art. Be careful not to get into a get-rich-quick scheme. This person has a non-artistic personality. I know every

artist dreams big, and we all have been there, but reality tells us otherwise. If you enter the art world with this focus on fast money and glory, this is not the right book for you.

As an example, between Paul Klee and Andy Warhol, I prefer Klee by far. Klee was a sensitive person; a musician, a discreet creator that made small but beautiful artworks. Warhol was the opposite and he really represents almost everything I dislike in art. One was a visual poet, the other intended to be a star

from the first moment and intended to produce art mechanically, like a *machine*.

**Two:** To be successful: This is a good dream to have; if you don't make it immediately, don't panic: start on another artwork instead. Don't ever give up. Analyse the market, bet your artistic talent on everything, from art exhibitions to art lessons, including illustration and licensing.

**Three:** just to be You: Ask yourself five questions. Ask: Who am I?

What is my personal style? What are my goals in this competitive art world? Do I want to seduce others or impose my artistic view on them? Do I want to teach or sell?

Because these are the crucial questions in your initial phase, these questions will help you understand your own place in the *crazy* art world of today.

And from here on in, you will find the answer to the most important question: what kind of artist do you want to be and really will be in the

future?

## 1\_3. Mentors

I'm going to talk about three of your main mentors: friends, teachers and heroes, and then several ideas about art.

Your **friends** who are artists too, are some of the most important advisers you will have; they are equals, someone like you, with the same problems and with a common view on life and art. Together, you will study art masters, will have dreams of becoming famous artists, will build a personal, artistic style

and will exchange ideas on art techniques and tips, which can make you a better artist.

With art **teachers** you will learn a lot, not only about art history, but also some basic lessons for life. You will develop essential values that will make you a better person and a wiser and more resilient artist. Remember what Picasso said: “Bad teachers have always been my worst enemies”...

With the artists whose style you love, your **heroes**, you will learn



from their experience, from their positive examples. Dreaming and doing, you will get there, this will be the first step to a stronger style and a better art career.

Now, ideas, always ideas. You will feel inspired by great ideas: some ideas never die. From great artists, you will learn true wisdom. Study Picasso's quotes, as they are invaluable for a knowledge of art.

And finally, beyond art. You have to think outside the box, read many things, not just about art. Keep up

an interdisciplinary dialogue.  
Study everything you want –  
connected to art or not. Have lots of  
different intellectual interests.  
Read comics, or social sciences, or  
astronomy, or interior design.

Just try to be a complete human  
being.

## 1\_4. Main Medium

As an artist, one of the main issues you have to decide on is this: what kind of art will you do. Some artists like Picasso or Richter had several styles; however seeking and finding your own voice in art is crucial.

Then you will need to experiment with different materials, so you can choose the technique that best suits your personal style. I'm going to talk about five categories that have been around for decades, or even centuries.

If you choose **photography** as your main medium, you have to decide: what kind of photos? Will they be in color or black and white? What will they be used for, magazines or artistic exhibitions? Finally, will this be your main medium?

If you choose **drawing**, you have to decide: Will drawing be just a preparatory study for a painting, or a complete and final artwork? How and where will you sell this? Will you sell originals or prints? Finally, what will be the other artistic mediums you want to cultivate?

If you choose **painting**, decide to which art movement your painting will belong? Realism or abstract? Oil or acrylics? Landscapes or portraits? Where will you want to exhibit? What other mediums will complement your art?

If you choose **sculpture**, you will have to resolve two main problems: the space problem and the logistics problem. Face it, sculptures are big (in the space they occupy), also heavy and expensive (the cost of materials); and then think about this being or not being your main

artistic medium?

But you may also choose the **conceptual** approach. Think about it: art as an idea; land art; invisible art; art that you don't physically make but tell artisans to make for you; ready-made sculptures, and so on. There are so many conceptual artists today! So many different and innovative ideas in this artistic movement! And so many art movements that were created through these ideas! It is important, though, to keep this in mind so you don't get lost: what

conceptual ideas do you *agree* with? What conceptual artists will you follow? What does it mean? So don't forget the connection between linguistics and the conceptual in art; and also the basis of minimalism, with artists like Sol LeWitt or Carl Andre. You just need a simple, small Taschen book to know the foundations of the Conceptual approach.

And you will need that to understand the art of the second half of the twentieth century.

## 1\_5. Community (ies)

Nowadays there are so many communities... school colleagues, friends, art websites, family, and so on. I will talk about the two main communities: online and offline. When you become aware of some limitations to one of these categories/ groups, choose the other one instead for a while: this way you will explore all the possibilities for showcasing your artwork and make valuable friendships along the way.



**Online communities:** here you have many options. Create a blog or personal website, where you will have your detailed *curriculum*, with the art exhibitions you have been a part of, your contacts and an email form; join Facebook groups devoted to visual arts; keep a visual portfolio on ArtWanted, DeviantArt or Behance; join also LinkedIn groups; show your behind the scenes on Instagram; release new artworks on Pinterest, and seek crowdfunding investment – like the arts´ related Patreon website.

**Offline communities:** when you feel you are spending too much time online, turn your attention to the *real* social side: exchange views with teachers or student colleagues, talk to friends and neighbours, go to your favourite art galleries or art fairs and visit creative markets that will inspire you.

Use all these groups to improve and support your art career. You can have an online store, you can be a YouTube or Instagram *star*. There are lots of tools that can help you

achieve your artistic goals: so, use them in the way that makes sense for you and your art!

## **TWO. Your Art**

2\_1. Main activity (ies)

2\_2. Personal style

2\_3. Technique

2\_4. Money/time schedules

2\_5. Choices

## 2\_1. Main activity (ies)

Your main activity could be to **sell original works**. If this is your case, let me ask you this: are you sure? Nowadays, in the market, there is relatively low demand for new contemporary artworks, so... is this going to be your main activity? Once again: are you sure? Remember: this is going to be the one and only sale of one precious object that you will lose forever. An original artwork gone. It's a pity – right?

Or your main activity can be to **sell prints** of original artworks. This seems a good idea but... perhaps there is even less demand from the art market, because, many times, the client prefers to own an original and the price range of art prints is much lower. However there seems to be high demand on websites like Etsy, and also check out selling digital files online and also selling your designs for several products on websites like Society6, RedBubble, Zazzle, CafePress - or t-shirts on Spreadshirt. Diversify the product range and diversify the

online channels where you sell your designs.

Another activity: **Licensing**. Well, this is an excellent option, however it's hard to get a reliable, quality company partnership. You can earn a lot with the right contacts and the right range of products, with almost no *headaches*, because the practical stuff is dealt with by the company. These are the positive aspects, but in reality most of the times it is not a straightforward process.

Or it can be **teaching**. You can teach offline - or online with e-learning websites and systems. Giant sites like Skillshare and Udemy provide what many online teachers lack: a marketplace of millions of students. This is a fast growing market. There are thousands of teachers for millions of students.. It is one of the few activities I know where demand is in fact much bigger than the offer. It is one of the best chances you have for the real possibility of earning a good *passive income*: you earn royalties even when you are



not working. This is a trend nowadays - and many teachers are finding it very appealing and effective as a real income generator.

**Stock photo sites** and apps are also a part of this passive income trend. To earn good money here you need to be a real photo professional, with models' contacts, places and authorization to shoot, the agreement of the models that you can sell the photos you take with them and lots and lots of quality photos.

But be aware - there are many dreams sold in this area, don't believe in everything you are told. However, these are consistent options: Dreamstime; iStockPhoto; the app Foap; and Shutterstock. There are millions and millions of photos on these websites, taken by everyone with nothing more than just a simple smartphone and the will and taste to shoot good photos.

Knowing your main activity is to know you - the artist.

## 2\_2. Personal style

One first question: have you got a **personal style** already?

Have you got a favourite technique already also? Is your art style well defined? And, do you have a favourite artist? If so, why? It is very important that you know *why*. What is your level of connection and commitment to art?

What kind of **art** do you like? We must know about the kind of art we really love, and also to try to understand several art styles: to

appreciate the poetry of the  
imperfection of Expressionism and  
to understand how abstract your  
art is.

These are some **art techniques** you  
may like:

- . Fabric installation
- . Wire or Lego sculpture
- . Face painting
- . Drawing with hands
- . Machine art

Another important thing: are you a  
**colour** painter or a **shape** painter?

Picasso is considered to be a shape painter and Matisse, a colour painter; they were huge rivals but respected each other immensely. Then we have Cézanne, the so-called father of modern art, who was relatively *poor* at drawing but had a really good focus on geometry and colour composition.

You have a *river of colours* inside of you: is what you feel inside, best expressed in: colour – or shape?

Let's talk about having a personal  
Style

**One.** Yeah, it seems the hardest thing to find but... it's the easiest! I know artists who started out of nothing and built their style with very small steps. Nowadays there is hyper-specialisation, and everybody talks about a *niche* market.

Do not accept this as being always true; keep formal diversity in your work. However, remember that a piece of art can incorporate many different styles and can show influences of more than one movement. And if you don't have a personal *brand* (a website, a name,

a style etc) - and that involves specializing in a particular subject or technique - you cannot be said to have a personal style.

**Two.** So do not try to develop a highly complex, original style as a first step. On the contrary, find your unique voice in doing simple things, like *throwing paint on the canvas and seeing what happens*. This process of experimenting with styles, techniques and materials is essential. It is through this process that you will understand what comes naturally to you. There is a

time to try different things and there is a time to listen to teachers, mentors and other artists. They usually have a more **neutral** view and, therefore, a more objective one than you, about what you are doing in art. Sometimes their advice is not easy to hear, but listen and you will have something to focus on to improve what you do.

**Three.** And then, with that fonte of knowledge, you can decide what to do, when to do it, at what pace you will do it and if that is the end of the road or just a new beginning for



you. Performance or canvas artist; graffiti or illustration; surrealist or abstract; and so on. It may seem irrelevant: it may seem only a vague direction in infinite space; a tremulous movement in the void with no safety net underneath. But you can believe that, in art, to have a clear focus is worth its weight in gold. Remember: First find your own path, only then must you find the technique.

And always question yourself: What do I want to **express** to the viewer with my art? There has to be a

connection between inner feelings and the exterior; feel the idea of *art for the sake of art* deep inside your heart. If you have an artists' soul, you don't need to justify what you are doing.

Art is *the* goal itself.

## 2\_3. Technique

### **Watercolour**

Here, you have the connection between drawing and painting – and knowing the artworks of Miró and Klee is essential for a faster evolution. When painting, try to explore the maximum amount of visual resources on a small scale (A4), and then make them bigger (A3, A2) over time. It is a very good starting point for the beginner artist. And water is an excellent painting medium. There is never too much water, because it adds

light and new creative ideas all the time.

### **Coloured pencils and black ink**

Starting here is also a good option. Once again, we have drawing and painting connected. Drawing on paper is great to help you master drawing a perfect line and improving your wrist movement as well. You can also make sketches to use later in canvas paintings.

### **Oil pastels**

With a bar of oil pastel you have power in your hands: you draw and

apply paint at the same time! There are no unpleasant odours, unlike like varnish or spray paint. It is a *messy* material, yes, and you will need *tons* of drying spray to really dry it, but it is, however, an awesome solution for beginners to learn the first steps. I would like to suggest a new material, with the same characteristics as oil pastel, called the oil bar. It has the vivid colours of oil pastel but it's made with plants - not an oil based material - so it doesn't get the canvas or paper *dirty*, it's a neutral material. Why don't you try it?

## **Acrylics**

Acrylic paint dries extremely fast, and colours are not so vivid as oil pastels, but you can fix this with water-based gloss paint. With acrylics we can apply layers over layers of paint; and water allows you to obtain many creative, transparent, visual effects in the painting. You will have to think fast, because it dries very quickly – but that is a very good thing in art.

## **And... everything else!**

. Oil on canvas - the most traditional, painting technique;

- . Collage;
- . Surrealist techniques, like Dalí's double images, *cadaver exquisite*, Max Ernst's frottage;
- . Different kinds of brushstrokes, like expressionists, Basquiat;
- . The abstract stains of Mark Rothko;
- . And most of all, learn to appreciate all kinds of artistic expressions to be a complete artist with a clear view of what beauty *is* and *can* be.

In this context, I will talk about extraordinary painters, who did not

have a good drawing basis. This is very important and proves to all of us artists, that we can be an average or even mediocre draftsman and still make great art. After all, there are many drawing styles: to copy reality is not the only way to *master the technique*.

As Klee used to say – “To draw is to take a line for a walk”

There is no contradiction as regards this: many times, technical weaknesses are our strongest allies in building an entire artistic style



from scratch.

I know that my personal choices will seem odd, to say the least, but you will see that they make a lot of sense, nevertheless.

Here are these four amazing painters:

**Paul Cézanne** achieved success, but only later in his life. He had a difficult personality. Nowadays he is known as the father of modern art, because his late Sainte-Victoire painting series and his geometric

ideas were a major influence on Cubism – and the cubism of Picasso is one of the most revolutionary art movements of the first half of the twentieth century. However, Cézanne’s technical limitations as regards his sketches of human figures are evident.

**Henri Matisse** was the leader of the Fauvists, a movement that changed the way colours are used in a visual composition.

Modern art *classics* now considered masterpieces – like *The Dance* – present several technical issues as

regards the representation of the human figure; the same kind of limitations as Cézanne's work.

**Dubuffet** created the Raw Art Movement, which represents the art of children and madmen. His art went through several series of very diverse artworks, from abstract textures to public art sculptures, including a brutalist approach to the human figure.

**Basquiat** is considered a neo-expressionist painter, a child prodigy. He mixed text with image

like no other artist before him. His paintings also have a lot of abstract colour stains. His drawing was very basic, but the final paintings shows huge movement and strength.

However, there is a huge difference in the times when these artists lived when changes happened in the way drawing was used in art. While in the era of Impressionism (Matisse/ Cézanne), drawing was still regarded as a very important basis to make quality paintings, the new Expressionism (Dubuffet/ Basquiat) didn't take it as

seriously.

### **Some thoughts**

In art academies there are nude drawing, nude painting and nude sculpture classes, right? And all the artists have to do almost the same sketches or final artworks, based only on a view of the subject from a slightly different angle from each other.

In my view, this is an error. The artist has to bring a new perspective to art, and this new perspective begins in the phase of

drawing a simple line. And I don't understand the *sketch* notion: every artwork must be a final artwork, for me there is no such thing as a preparatory study for a painting through a sketch drawing.

If you, the artist, don't have a unique voice, I regret to say this, but you are not a true artist. And if you start by copying reality or just a part of it, you are denying yourself that personal unique voice. It is a destructive circle, from which you won't ever escape.

It seems to me that no one really wants just another nude study from a slightly different angle any more. Your creativity has to begin at the *beginning*: when your pencil or pen or brush touches the paper.

Your life is your singular experience, and if you give up being unique, then your art will be the same as everyone's else.

However, not everyone agrees about these ideas. For example, as regards Matisse and Cézanne, everyone loves Matisse's colours,

myself included. And everyone respects Cézanne, of course; after all, he began the modern art revolution. However, I think their drawing skills were not as good as their painting skills, though the art world says otherwise.

So if we cannot defy the art world's main institutions when they say what our opinions should be, we are just accepting the information they want us to have about art.

I think it is very important to demystify art dogmas; and this begins when we form our own



opinions about the facts – and not just follow mainstream opinions.

As you can see - you don't need an excellent technique to be a one of a kind artist!

. Summary of art techniques:

	<b>Movements</b>	<b>Artists</b>	<b>Techniques/ Materials</b>
<b>Writing</b>	Arab/ chinese calligraphy, etc)	Mark Tobey, Franz Kline, Pollock	Brush and china ink
(transition)	Integrate calligraphy in your art / Create abstract symbols		

<b>Drawing</b>	Surrealism	Escher, Klee, Miró, Cruzeiro Seixas	Mixed media
(transition)	Watercolor / Oil pastel / Pen / Engraving / Collage / Comics		
<b>Painting</b>	Informalism and <i>arte povera</i>	Rauschenberg, Tàpies, Millares	Combines, objects on the paintings
(transition)	From 2 dimensions of the canvas to 3D of sculpture		
<b>Sculpture</b>	Installation and performances	Louise Bourgeois, Christo, Tinguely, Duchamp	Ready- made, objects- sculpture

(transition)	Give a new meaning to ordinary objects		
<b>Conceptual</b>	Minimalism, Linguistics	Carl Andre, Kounellis, Nauman	Art as idea, dematerializa tion of the art object
(transition)	The massive amount of written documents about conceptual completes the circle: we go back to the beginning – invention of <b>Writing</b>		

Technique is not the master – you are. It is just a creative tool. Use techniques according to what you want to express and what you feel inside – listen to your soul first.

## 2\_4. Income and schedules

This is my advice to you: establish a **monthly** income goal.

- . How much would you like to earn?
- . And what is a realistic, monthly income goal that you can achieve in this creative business?

When you have an idea about that, divide it by thirty (days).

- . And now you have a **daily** income goal, which should be realistically attainable.

So, divide the daily income goal by:

- . Each **website** you use to earn money from your art
- . And each artistic **activity** you carry out.

Let's see: first you must have an overall (monthly) goal

- . Then establish a partial (daily) goal for each aspect of your art activity

From this moment on, you can organise your time schedule

around these partial goals.

And when the several income streams make it possible to achieve and surpass them, then you adjust the main focus and the rest of your creative activities, in order to maximize your profits – always from an artistic point of view.

But your main goal must be to create pure beauty – not to be an *accountant*.

## 2\_5. Choices

The choices you make depend on the kind of artist you are now and what you want to be in the near future.

. **Now**: in which art gallery do you want to exhibit and why?

. **Future**: in which museum do you want your work to be in?

. Pedagogy: are you an artist or a teacher – or both?

. In your view, is art a way to make money or is art an attitude, a way to live life in a deeper and more

fulfilling way?

Do you **prefer**:

- . Big art fairs like ARCO or Basel...
- . or small art venues with lots of unknown artists?
- . Auction houses like Sotheby's or Christie's...
- . or museums like the Louvre?
  
- . Or just to be in your art studio making creative stuff?

What is your **motivation**:

- . It can be money – what matters to



you is to sell fast and make very expensive artworks

. or passion – to be connected to projects you really love

Do you belong to:

. **Contemporary** art

. or **modern** art?

Do you understand the difference?

. The deeper motivation of the fathers of modern art...

. Or – the ambition of contemporary artists like Warhol or Jeff Koons!

Finally, do you prefer:

- . Andy Warhol or Joseph Beuys?
- . Van Gogh or Paul Gauguin?
- . Salvador Dalí or Pablo Picasso?
- . Damien Hirst or Anselm Kiefer?

Study the different artists and understand why you prefer one or the other artist in a very deep way, in order to know yourself better and to also know what you want to achieve in the art world.

This includes comparing the first phase of their artworks and their

final, mature phase.

To know and understand this evolution will make you your best mentor.

## **THREE – Art's main questions**

3\_1. Art history

3\_2. Crucial artists

3\_3. Essential art movements

3\_4. Artists' quotes

3\_5. Game-changing artworks

### 3\_1. Art history

#### . Historical evolution of Art

<b>Pre- historical art</b>	<p>Rock painting: symbols/ hands/ animals and people on caves like Lascaux</p> <p>Small sculptures: Goddesses representation</p> <p>Art seems to be connected to magic</p>
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<p><b>(History begins)</b></p>	<p>and religious beliefs/ spirituality</p> <p>Invention of Writing</p>
<p><b>Religious art</b></p>	<p>Biblical representations in painting and sculpture</p>
<p>In the XIVth century, the rules of perspective are invented in which a</p>	

painting is organised by horizon lines and vanishing points, to express depth of field. It is a key moment in art history, and it will give figurative art the leading role for centuries.

**XIX th  
century**

Essential  
creative  
movements

Impressionism -  
Expressionism

Romanticism and  
Symbolism

<b>1st half of XX th century</b>		<p>Beginning of Cubism, which renders the rules of perspective unnecessary ...and Beginning of Western Abstract art, by Kandinsky</p> <p><b>Picasso, Duchamp, Klee, Miró, Dalí</b></p>
Artists		
<b>2nd half of XXth</b>		<p>Conceptual/ Installation/</p>



<p><b>century</b></p> <p>Artists</p>	<p>Performance/ <i>Arte povera</i></p> <p><b>Beuys/ Tàpies/ Richter/ Kiefer/ Basquiat</b></p>
<p><b>XXI st century</b></p> <p>Artists</p>	<p>Graffiti/ New media art/ Internet</p> <p><b>Banksy/ Hirst/ Koons/ Nauman</b></p>

( Modern Art: 1880 – 1950 /  
Contemporary Art: 1950 – until today )

**These are the pre-historical roots  
of art:**

Images existed before the invention of writing; and the invention of writing is considered to be the beginning of recorded history. Why? Because events could now be documented. Long before writing existed, there were only images of the natural world.

Before, there existed emotion; then

there was rational thought. Why? Because man always seeks for a meaning in everything around him. Picasso used to say this is a disease of our time: to seek a meaning in anything.

### **Abstract art and figurative art**

Abstract art is very, very old in human history. There are eras of figurative dominance and others where abstraction is the main art movement. There can be a very constructive dialogue between figurative images and abstract stains; there is no painting 100%

figurative or 100% abstract, there is always a mix of both styles. The impasto of realism masters, if you zoom in and zoom in again, it becomes pure abstraction, the brushstrokes are non-figurative. Perhaps it is because of this, that the *purists* say a canvas shouldn't be seen up close...

The same applies to the paintings of abstract masters like Richter or Tàpies or Kandinsky: there is always some figurative element in a *purely* abstract visual composition.

## **History / Invention of writing**

Writing is a way to rationalize and give a direct meaning to abstract symbols that have many meanings. So the meanings of the symbols become limited to one particular meaning based on information: it has a logical approach, very different from the multiple interpretations of the image, and represents a *second* phase of the relationship between man and nature.

## **The rule of Renaissance perspective**

In the early fifteenth century, the architect Brunelleschi, the sculptor Donatello and the painter Masaccio created a new method of exploring real space and invented a procedure to represent it in three dimensions (length, width and depth) on a flat surface. This process, called perspective, which allows us to suggest the illusion of depth on a surface of only two dimensions, was such a brilliant discovery that, for almost five hundred years, all painters believed that there was no other system to represent three-dimensional space,

which led to a fantastic development of figurative painting and the supplanting of abstract tendencies until the beginning of the twentieth century, Cubism showed the limitations of this system by demonstrating that, despite its mathematical and rational character, it was in fact an artificial method.

The perspective rule was widely applied to architecture and painting, and was one of the most powerful creative tools for Renaissance artists.

With the invention of photography and cinema, artists asked themselves why they would continue to paint any more, because the painted image was no match for the realism of the photograph.

I would suggest you research the real meaning of Cubism, in terms of overcoming the limitations of the rules of perspective; Cubism depicts the object from many angles, adding a layer of intellectuality, movement and without limitation to a particular



moment in time that adds a lot to the way perspective creates depth of field inside a bi-dimensional canvas.

Another very important art movement arose at the same time as Cubism; Abstract art was started by Wassily Kandinsky, and this also shocked people as it was, almost completely devoid of everyday, reality elements. Look for Kandinsky's interesting and highly influential theoretical books such as *Concerning the spiritual in art*.

## **Modern art revolution**

Revolution in techniques; revolution as regards the subject of paintings; revolutionary art movements; revolution in sculpture with Duchamp's ready-mades.

A broader revolution in art came with the influence of the **Conceptual** movement, this is one of the most influential art movements in the second half of the twentieth century. The beginning of Conceptual Art is connected with the science of Language – Linguistics; and also was born from

the Minimalist Art movement.

It could be said that there are two possible avenues for the future evolution of communication. One is the current tendency, based on day-to-day practice, where information is expressed in a direct and singular way which serves capitalism and is far from the artistic ideal and the other one, that represents the subjective, creative approach which is perhaps the most logical of them both, despite the fact that it represents an anti-practical process.

These are the three phases of the evolution of human communication:

**. Phase 1: Contemporary Societies**

- Culture based on words and book reading; simple decoding is necessary;
- Segmented, fragmentary vision (accentuated by scientific subdivision and non-use of the interdisciplinary dialogue);
- The letters themselves have no meaning; if separated from a given

set they are not recognized as symbols (letters are symbols used as signals);

- Basic representation at the formal level (two-dimensional)

- Transmission (codes) predominates, relegating communication (language) to a secondary activity;

- Emphasis on the financial factor/ speed/ succinct transmission of information through the rules of a code already known (does not require the creation of the code itself);

## **. Phase 2: Egyptian, Chinese societies**

- Two- dimensional representation, but with some improvements in textures and monumental sculptures made with more aesthetic sense;
- Combination of two essentials: the creation of messages and the pleasure of constructing beautiful and timeless messages;
- Transmission by graphic signs that already allow various interpretations and that are descended from signs from other

cultures;

- Code more open to new interpretations and meanings;
- The sentence structure allows a greater margin of creation on the part of the interpreter;
- Evident influence of visual culture.

### **. Phase 3: Symbolic Society**

- Three-dimensional, real representation of objects (they represent themselves and also represent ideas), thus breaking a huge psychological barrier to direct

communication;

- Permanent contact with the world of language;

- Culture in all its scope, encompassing all human capacities: sight, touch, smell, hearing...

- Allows a global vision etc which is now aware of all levels of complete communication, adapting its functions to the characteristics of his own personality and then to society;

- Multiple interpretations of only one symbol, not needing a context to acquire their own meaning.



This last human communication phase is being achieved with contemporary art object installations, and this path is represented by essential artists like Joseph Beuys or Louise Bourgeois.

## 3\_2. Crucial artists

### **Cézanne**

Do you know why is Paul Cézanne considered by many art specialists as the father of modern art?

He makes us see reality with geometrical shapes. His painting has a wonderful connection between shapes and colours. He belongs to the Impressionism era, but goes beyond it, he really announces the birth of modern art – both Cubism and Abstraction. The tendency to make painting rationally and not emotionally

starts right here.

## **Picasso**

Picasso is *the* revolutionary artist. He introduced new art techniques and materials in sculpture, pottery, engraving, and he is the artist of both shapes and colours: the blue period, the rose period and so on. Guernica is one of the few paintings of the twentieth century with a strong historical meaning. He is one of the founders of the essential cubist movement, and this movement transformed the perspective rules of the

Renaissance, which had reigned over figurative art for centuries.

## **Klee**

Paul Klee is the *child* that grew up. He had an extraordinary imagination. He found his connection to colours on a journey to Tunisia, and made many experiments with different materials and textures. Teaching us a new vision of reality and a vital, serene, poetic attitude towards it, Klee presents himself as one of the great creators of modern consciousness. The 50-year

exhibition of modern art (Brussels, 1958) equated Klee with Picasso, giving them equal numerical representation, and putting them at the head of all the other painters of the mid-century.

## **Kandinsky**

Wassily Kandinsky is one of the artists that changed the path of modern art; with abstraction he pushed the boundaries of painting. There is clearly a new connection between colour and shape - artworks don't have to make sense anymore; emotion is the only

master. Abstraction has been a constant in human history, but was asleep for centuries, and Kandinsky rediscovered it for western art.

Kandinsky is one of the men who changed the path of twentieth-century art.

## **Miró**

Joan Miró produced some of the most instinctive artworks in modern art. He uses symbols with deep meanings. Like Klee, he has a huge respect for the sensitivity of children. Tàpies once said that Miró

punched the viewer with his strong pure colours, while Breton stated that he was the most surreal of them all.

## **Giacometti**

Alberto Giacometti's existentialist style of sculpture is about exploring the limits of the human experience. In these artworks, the subject matter is of minimal importance, and expressivity is maximum. It is sculpture influenced by the shock of Second World War in Europe.

## **Rodin**

Auguste Rodin made what can be called *expressionist* sculpture. Here there are raw emotions. His highly skilled and ground-breaking sculpting technique caused controversy at the time: he was accused of using the human body as a mould for his highly realist works.

## **Van Gogh**

This is the man that made the transition between Impressionism and Expressionism. He invented a new kind of brushstroke, painting



directly from the tube with large, circular brush movements. His art is the painting of bright colours, of light. He understood and expressed the marvels of nature like no other.

### **Jackson Pollock**

With abstract expressionist Action Painting, the painter's gestures transform the canvas into combat terrain, and his *Dripping* technique documents the painter's psychic state in a rhythmic flow that produces a coherent unit, a labyrinth of strangely controlled and unified lines.

### 3\_3. Essential art Movements

#### **Impressionism**

This is the art movement that announces the coming of modern art. It introduces the innovative technique of small colour stains - accentuated with the Pointillism of Seurat - and new painting subjects. There is a romantic notion about nature and a very sensitive and kind of fast *impression* about reality. Impressionists fought the Paris *salon* and academic art evaluation system. Without Impressionism there would not

have been Cubism or the modern art revolution.

## **Expressionism**

The expressionist technique is minimal: the artist just expresses his soul and emotions directly. The drawing basis tends to be rather scarce.

## **Surrealism**

Surrealism was born from Dadaism. Dalí and Breton connected Surrealism to Freud's Psychoanalysis - so the question arises: is Surrealism an image

movement or a literary movement?

## **Cubism**

It was fundamental to begin the twentieth century art revolution. It expressed depth of field in a new, provocative way: the object was painted from many angles. It allowed the figure to be built through thought, not with what the eye sees.

## **Abstraction**

For this movement, reality was just a starting point. It is possible to make art only from the mind. All

previous manifestation of abstract art are suddenly reinforced and revalued.

## **Conceptual**

The art generally known as conceptual - or information - originated from some minimalist works, such as the theoretical productions of Sol LeWitt, and espouses an unprecedented appreciation of the 'idea', with the consequent abandonment of visual experience and the sensory pleasure of execution. The artist despises the material and the

craftsmanship, counting on the total freedom of having support from assistants. Painting and sculpture are considered outdated, artistic categories; while word, language, and communication offer an unlimited number of expressive possibilities. Art as just an idea, with no need for an object to exist physically. It goes from reality to thought, directly. Many books have been written about it, and this fact led to the assumption that perhaps it is just a movement for art critics and intellectuals.

## **Performance art**

This art movement has connection to theatre. There is human action in motion. It represents ideas in a special context.

## **Street art**

Is this only a trend, or something deeper and with a structural basis? Here dimension and proportion are very important. It is perhaps just a *UFO* in the art world; no one knows exactly how to handle it and the right context to show it in. *Enfant terrible*, Banksy is one of the most provocative stars of this art

movement.

### **New media art**

This movement represents the huge influence of the Internet and new technologies: it mixes image and text. There is no doubt it's a new creative path, but maybe it lacks decisive and important artworks.



### 3\_4. Artists' quotes

#### **Paul Klee**

“We must not seek on the top of the tree the same shape as its' roots”

#### **(Said about) Joan Miró**

“I only seek in artists, their divine inspiration; everything else is just silly”

#### **Antoni Tàpies**

“A totally irrational attitude can work in art”

#### **Pablo Picasso**

“I don’t seek; I find”

### **Kasimir Malévich**

”Only when the habit of seeing the representation of reality in paintings vanishes, will we see the artwork as it is”

### **Jackson Pollock**

“Technique is just one way to make a statement. I want to express my emotions; not to illustrate them”

### 3\_5. Game-changing artworks

#### **The scream – by Edward Munch**

This famous painting talks directly to our soul: the human being alone in an oppressive world. It is one of the most striking expressionist paintings ever, and a deep and truthful representation of angst and depression.

#### **Les Femmes D'Alger (O.J.) – by Pablo Picasso**

This is the painting that officially began the modern art era; and represents also the beginning of

cubism. It expresses the influence of both Cézanne's late works and primitive art, which Picasso collected. The women in this painting have sharp lines; impossible angles. It is an insult to the boring, bourgeois life: these women are in a brothel. This canvas is the beginning of a visual revolution that lasts for more than a century.

### **Guernica – also by Pablo Picasso**

This is the masterpiece of cubism, and also a way of goading the German armed forces in occupied

France. It is a spectacular, huge, black and white canvas: colours are not needed to express human suffering in the village of Guernica, bombed by the Nazis. The huge dimensions and the violence of the lines are overwhelming to the viewer, a truly, visual shock. This iconic painting is still today a symbol of war and death.

### **The fountain – by Marcel Duchamp**

This urinal was a seismic event in art; it belongs to a series of sculptures called “Ready-mades”,

because they were just ordinary objects, only their meaning has changed. In fact, the object already existed, just the interpretation of the artist gives it a new life in the world of art. Duchamp re-interpreted the object beyond its actual shape and practical qualities.

### **One and three chairs – by Joseph Kosuth**

This artwork is an example of the lost connection between conceptual art and linguistics. It represents a chair in three visual expressions:

the object of a chair, its written concept from a dictionary and a photograph of a chair. Conceptual art stands for the dematerialising of art: the object is not needed in art. I have to mention here the critique of the artist who I regard as *my master* Antoni Tàpies towards conceptual art; *Many people in the art world talk about conceptual art and make a living from conceptual ideas, but this kind of art movement still produces physical artworks, objects that are sold, just like every other form of art.*

This movement is still, today, very

influential; but don't let these radical ideas paralyse your creativity. I have seen it happen many times, which is why I warn you to be alert to this danger.



## **FOUR. Art ideas**

4\_1. Challenges

4\_2. Creative techniques to try out

4\_3. 5 out of the box ideas

4\_4. Things to understand

4\_5. Antoni Tàpies and Joseph  
Beuys

## 4\_1. Challenges

Sometimes there are problems that we must face and find creative solutions to solve them. This happens in art too. These are some of the most important challenges that artists had to overcome.

### **Moving image (photography / cinema)**

With these two highly popular inventions, realism ceased to be the only form of representation in painting; people would ask painters – “Why do you still make paintings?”

I can have a totally realistic photograph, or I can just go to the cinema”. And as a *side effect reaction* to this, Cubism and Abstraction were created. The artist gained creative autonomy; however his task was no longer seen as *useful* by bourgeois society.

### **The perspective (Renaissance / Cubism)**

With Picasso’s Cubism, the validity of the perspective rule suffered a serious blow. And with the advent of abstract art, visual composition rules changed forever, and the

historical roots of abstract art came alive again.

### **Artist versus Craft**

This difference between an artist and an artisan was denied by the iconic Bauhaus art and design school, and the connection between art and industry is an issue also addressed by the Arts and Crafts and The Deutscher Werkbund intellectual movements. The influence of the Bauhaus art and design school was such a big problem for the Nazis, that Hitler, himself, closed the school, and

persecuted the teachers like Paul Klee, who was accused of being Jewish and was forced to escape to Switzerland.

The Bauhaus was the first democratic school in the world, not only because it was based on the principle of collaboration and common research between teachers and students, but because its faith in progress in a functional, and non-hierarchical, society foreshadowed in its own organisation, the structure of the democratic society of the future.

For Gropius and his collaborators, living in a civilised way meant living rationally, questioning and solving all problems in dialectical terms.

### **The conceptual challenge**

There are some initial influences of the conceptual movement: it begins with a minimalist approach, and linguistics is also a very strong influence – but only in the first stages. There is a denial of the need for a physical art object - just the idea is important. These ideas have spread to many other artistic tendencies, and have made the

conceptual approach one of the most important movements in the second half of the twentieth century.

The controversy over the sale of conceptual art objects is never ending, because photographs of conceptual artistic objects continue being sold. We cannot deny the harmful effect of the idea of the dematerialising of art on new generations of artists: it's one of the most negative aspects of the conceptual approach.

Tàpies speaks about Conceptual Art in these terms: “I share many of the concerns and statements of conceptual art, but there are some objectionable ideas. For example the idea of anti-commercial purity, when this type of art is as or more commercialised as the other artistic movements. On the other hand, it is false that conceptualists have eliminated the idea of an art object. Also the idea that the contemplation of a work of art is a mystical attitude, close to obscurantism is totally wrong. The facets of dogmatism and excessive



rationalisation are also negative aspects of the conceptual movement”.

## 4\_2. Creative techniques to try out

You can make a **sculpture** using anything: objects; trash; plastic; and many more materials. It is not the material that is in command - You are; and you use materials as a medium to produce art that transcends its origins and is unique.

In **painting**, few people know that the ground-breaking drip painting technique that Pollock used, was inspired by sand painting on the floor by Navajo Indian tribes.

Another key moment in visual arts was the creation of huge areas of installations known as **Land art**, and Christo is one of the most outstanding artists; he connects this movement to a very particular kind of *ephemeral art*: he wraps entire buildings or bridges in fabric: it is a radical view of public sculpture, and these have been highly influential artworks.

A very interesting new artist of large works of art is Joana Vasconcelos. Her fabric and objects installations, the revaluation of Portuguese

traditions and her very personal approach to Duchamp's legacy have made this woman a big star in the art world.

One of the most 'out of the box' ideas that came from the conceptual movement is this: you don't have to physically make the artwork: get some artisans to do it instead! This is **the art of not doing** (art)!

In **Performance / Happening**, there are legendary artists like Joseph Beuys or Alan Kaprow, but nowadays it is Marina Abramovitch

that is the one who makes the most influential works. Personally, I don't value this kind of creativity so much, I prefer *good old-fashioned* drawing, painting and sculpture, but check out her work if this resonates with you.

And now, Marcel Duchamp's famous interpretation of sculpture – the **Ready-made**. Ordinary objects which he reinterpreted in order to make them pieces of art. This is one of the most important achievements of visual arts, so I suggest you look at some of them

on Google images. Duchamp himself was a human riddle – he was an almost professional chess player and his art is full of word games and private jokes. As the comic book hero, Corto Maltese’s creator, Hugo Pratt, Duchamp never took himself too seriously...

You can also decide to just create **websites** and content for the internet: they can be considered art or not. Today with new media art, this kind of art is highly valued on the market, so why not? But try to find your own voice in art, not just

to follow the trends.

One of the most interesting, creative ideas is to connect **music with illustration**: on music albums covers, for example. There are many examples of great artworks: one of the best is Dire Straits' live album, *Alchemy*. It is also interesting the connection between handmade illustration and the digital image approach: try to make your own mix of these two creative techniques, they produce highly inspirational results.

### 4\_3. Out of the box ideas

Do not make art; just write books  
in POD system

**POD** means print on demand. It is the system that many publishers and even Amazon uses nowadays. They don't have thousands of physical books stored in garages; that time has passed: the individual book is now printed only when it is ordered. Big websites like Lulu.com are using this system to make the book market accessible to everyone that wants to write. It is a



big market nowadays, with Kindle and Kobo and CreateSpace and other players very active in book and ebook publishing.

Not making art but **talking** about art

Try to be a kind of art critic. This way you think about art, and you try to understand the artist's mentality. It doesn't seem to be, but it is, in fact, a very constructive and creative activity. Talking about art, this dialogue with other people, the deep analysis of an artwork is crucial to developing a more

complete and complex artistic personality.

Not making Art; **philosophizing** about an empty canvas

Art needs a lot of thought; the amount of mental energy used when making art is huge. This kind of dreaming mind set is typical of the artistic way of creating beautiful objects.

Not making art at all: do something **completely different**

If you're fed up with all the pseudo-intellectual attitude of art critics,

just give up creating art for a while,  
and only return when you are ready  
and have lots of fresh, new ideas.

Do not make art: but **talk about  
why you are not doing it**

What do I want to say? Well,  
analyse your relationship with art.  
Why do you need it? How do you  
feel when you make art? Is it  
essential for your life? Know these  
answers because they lead to other  
aspects in your life.

Once again: be a more complete  
artist, in every way.

## 4\_4. Things to understand

### **Abstract**

You have to understand this: abstract means to make art with artistic materials: colours, shapes, textures. It has an autonomous, logical approach to creativity. Art begins in our hearts, in our inner feelings, and only then comes out on the surface of the canvas or other medium. This kind of art is an attempt to produce artworks based on simple elements, without immediate connection to what exists outside, in reality.

Meaning: Abstract means “take from”, but this makes no sense: abstract art doesn’t take from the outside, it builds something from within.

### **New techniques**

The discovery of new techniques (with Van Gogh *circular gestures*, Gerhard Richter’s *to know when to stop*, Pollock’s *Dripping...*) there is a crucial creative development in visual arts, with disruptive new ways of using painting materials.

Do not do it, **tell others to do it**

Imagine this: the artist gives the idea; and the artisan makes the art object. How do you feel about this? Is it still important that you do the actual manual labour in art?

### **The unfinished work**

Some artworks are incomplete. There is an autonomous, creative poetry about this. Think about it, think about the importance of *arte povera*, and also Dubuffet's raw art made with primitive tools: all materials are suitable for art.

## 4\_5. Antoni Tàpies / Joseph Beuys

. Tàpies

### **More than just painting**

This artist took shape and colour to the next level, beyond the traditional limits of what is considered an art object. He extracted the soul out of the materials. His art may seem just to be a stain on the wall, made by time and nature itself: however its quality is unquestionable.

### **Awareness and Matter**

For Tàpies the most important is the idea that the material itself is expressive; strange symbols appear in the painting and have thousands of interpretations. His art has a direct connection to Shamanism: the oldest religious belief known to mankind.

### **Human representation**

Tàpies makes incisions that are traces which reveal the human presence; however his art doesn't depict humans directly. This is radical visual expression, between expressionism and abstract.



## **Raw materials and its poetry**

This artist's creative method is to create a totally unbalanced structure, influenced by European informalism and *arte povera*: he works with soil, marble dust, varnish, wood branches, fabric and many unusual materials.

## **Link to graffiti**

He also uses mixed media including spray paint. For him, a small symbol reveals the entire human soul. This is a radical view of the abstract stain. Tàpies is also a Zen Buddhist scholar, which has

a huge influence on his extremely meditative painting. His art remains beyond the limits of painting. He deeply respects and understands the ancient, eastern civilizations. Tàpies stands for a more simple human existence, which finds beauty in the most humble gestures.

. Beuys

German Joseph Beuys is one of the few European artists whose charisma rivals that of New York's leading artists such as Andy

Warhol. Beuys tried to merge art with life and was connected to the group of artists, Fluxus, who presented numerous innovative happenings to an unbelieving public. An art critic dubbed him a "cultural, assault soldier."

In 1967 he founded the German Student Party; in 1971 the Organization of non-voters; and in 1972 he was dismissed from his teaching position at the Dusseldorf Academy, after creating chaos by practically applying his theories on education. He deeply believes that

the individual will only be free through creative activity and his pedagogy is closely linked to an artistic vision of reality.

Again, his work shows the relationship with Shamanism, like Tàpies. In Beuys' art we see also very unusual materials like fat or animals; dead and alive.

He connects deeply with nature and the green political movement. He considered animals more intelligent than humans, because of their use of intuition. He began a new way of

making sculpture – the *social plastic* path, and introduces a real, interdisciplinary pedagogy, with connection to anthropology.

This is a wider pedagogical perspective of art, where he assumes the role of a teacher and also an ancient healer.

## **FIVE. Your marketing plan**

5\_1. Online presence

5\_2. Online marketing

5\_3. Offline marketing

5\_4. Your money

5\_5. Your time

## 5\_1. Online presence

### **Personal website (Y / N)**

You have to decide if you really need one. And do you want one? For me it makes a lot of sense because I have a professional online portfolio to link to and send to creative job offers. I feel proud that I made it myself on Wix web design's simple and complete system.

What is your **website system**?

It can be a storefront (here we have Shopify, or BigCartel, I prefer Wix);

you can have just a webstore (on Amazon, or post on Ebay); or build a personal website, and there is the famous Wordpress (however check the advantages and disadvantages of this system) - don't just do what everyone else does, try to get more detailed information, before you decide.

### **Email marketing Newsletters**

Here you must have and grow a relevant, long list of email addresses, relevant to your creative activity. Check also if your newsletter has the right email



design; colours, structure and so on. Try to have a fixed time of the day for emails. And be aware - now there are laws to obey: be careful, don't send what could be considered spam.

## **Blog Marketing**

One of the most rewarding, online marketing activities is to write blogs: this can take your business to the next level. You can achieve more recognition from the public with consistent, website partnerships: so you must choose well.

## **Adsense and Adwords**

These are the most famous ads on the entire internet. Announcing on google ads is a very good initial step to getting more clients. So - choose the right specs, don't rush this stage: your daily amount spent must be realistic; and plan very well the right keywords using Google Keyword Planner. Another way to have a steady income is to host google banners on your website. Nowadays all web design systems have that option, from blogs to Wordpress.

## 5\_2. Online marketing

### **Instagram**

Firstly, you must understand how the hashtags work: they are like keywords to search for meaningful content online. Instagram is a visual service, it is an app that works mainly on mobile devices. A profile with lots of quality images makes all the difference; so study the basics of photography and try to have a consistent Instagram content. Finding the right niche also helps.

## **Art groups on Facebook**

One of the most interesting things on Facebook are the groups: for every activity you will have communities of thousands of members that discuss every kind of subject. On Facebook do not impose; do not try to sell everywhere: there are groups just for selling stuff. You have to read the description of each group carefully, because in no time you will be expelled if you break a group's rules.

## **Pinterest**

This is a very useful, visual service for creative inspiration: many quality images, from photography to painting, drawing or sculpture. You can organize the visual files, in order to have a complete image reference for your artistic projects.

## **Twitter**

This is considered a micro blogging service. Its usefulness is questionable. Many people say it is more used by comedians for daily jokes; and mass media journalists, than the rest of the society (I'm one

of them...).

## **YouTub**

Remember this: to have a profitable channel on YouTube you must be highly popular and have of tens of thousands of subscribers, minimum. That is my personal view – other YouTubers may have a different opinion.

I advise you to discover your niche as soon as possible: the kind of audience that really wants to watch to your content. Be passionate in your presentations – and upload one video a week, at least.

## 5\_3. Offline Marketing

### **Business cards**

I advise you to always have them on you, to give the people you meet. Give a card to everyone you talk to – if he/ she is related to your creative activity. It may seem old-fashioned, but it still is very useful. In Portugal we have online print services; websites where anyone can make custom personal cards and other graphic design assets. You will need these services for flyers, personal cards and many more items.

## **Interviews in galleries**

Present yourself the best way. Organize a small Portfolio with the best ten or fifteen artworks' images. Summarize, summarize, summarize. You must study the artistic style that the gallery exhibits very well, before actually going there.

Improve the look of your artistic **CV**  
Make a simple grid structure in Word, then fill it in with a photo of you and all the info on just one page, make the grid invisible and finally export to a PDF file. Only the



most crucial information - make a simple design and print it on quality paper.

### Attend **openings of exhibitions**

I know many artists – like myself – don't feel at ease at social events, but try to be friendly and sociable on these occasions. Know what you want and know who you want to talk to. Don't be nervous, just relax and enjoy these social moments.

### Be part of - and be active in - **art communities**

One of the most welcoming services you will find online are artistic

communities like DeviantArt or ArtWanted: here you will meet thousands of artists, and they are usually really awesome, friendly groups of people, just supporting each other. Another option you have are offline artist groups like Urban Sketchers and other cultural associations. You will find many of them on Facebook - direct contact is easier there with Messenger. The group where you feel at home, is the place where you want to be.

## 5\_4. Use your money well

Plan to only spend/ reinvest  $\frac{1}{4}$  **of what you earn**

It is very useful to have a credit card just for online shopping/ your brand, and also to create a PayPal account for online payments, because many websites will pay you only by this system.

The best of the **cheapest**

As they say: best bang for your buck. You must get the best value for the money you spend. Choose well among the several product

options before considering to buy anything.

What type of **website: free or paid**

In Wix web design system you can have a good and free website forever if you want; and you only upgrade to a premium plan if and when you need extra services.

**A practical attitude: Selling**

I advise you to sell products and services without *selling your soul*: keep a work ethic, even online when you want to profit from your work. In social media to sell directly

is not, however, a good thing to do.

### **A sustainable perspective on art**

Try to live off of several creative activities that provide income streams without getting into dodgy, get-rich-quick schemes. There must be a deep, truthful respect for those who make *art for arts' sake*. Try to diversify the creative activities that both suit you as an artist and that can give you a regular pay check.

This is a balance that only you can find.

## 5\_5. Use your time well

**Time is money**, they say

So, cherish your activity: art is a specialised work; it involves emotion, deep feelings, culture, and many positive things that only a human being can achieve and express.

**Betting on the right main activity**

Ask yourself: What is my main activity? And make a list of what you do not want to do and then make decisions about what you

want your main activity to be. This can change with time - always adjust your goals to the context you are living in.

### **Organise your activities and make a schedule to do them on a daily basis**

Managing your time is a great way not to waste it on too many secondary activities.

### **How much time online per day**

You have to decide how many hours per day you spend online, and then the hardest part: respect your own

decision! Make your time online as productive as possible, and avoid games and other things that can be highly addictive and non-productive.

Do not forget **quality time**

Spending quality time with family and friends is essential. You must relax and have leisure time. Take breaks, even if it's just to socialise with friends for a while in a café, or go for a walk in the park.

And remember to adopt the right body posture when working at the



laptop, because you will be spending a lot of time doing that.

## **SIX. Conclusion**

6\_1. Achieve artistic recognition

6\_2. Achieve financial stability

6\_3. Achieve time balance

6\_4. Choose what to sell, when to sell and at what price

6\_5. Achieve success in your own terms

## 6\_1. Achieve artistic recognition

What are the ways of achieving this? The options you have:

It can be **online** (choose very carefully the websites that suit your creative activity best);

Or **offline** (at trade shows, art galleries, at your art studio and so on)

**How much** artistic recognition do you consider enough?

This has to do with what you consider to be success; find the

right places where you feel comfortable as an individual and as an artist.

### **How fast?**

Think about this: how long will it take? If you are in a hurry, this will be a very important issue for you to address.

Because...

Why do you consider time to be so important? Analyse why this is so fundamental to you. Do you want *everything right now*, or a more consistent career that you build

over time?

Your personality as an artist also includes all these simple aspects. Understanding them is to have a deeper awareness of what you are and stand for as a creative individual.

## 6\_2. Achieving financial stability

### **Choose your main activity**

This is a crucial decision. You may have several income streams, but this is where you will define yourself as an artist. Probably the majority of your monthly revenue will come from this main activity.

### **"Having this is to achieve that"**

Find the means to achieve a purpose; set priorities, decide what you really want to achieve and do. Your daily activities are a way to achieve a goal. You must be aware

of that and keep your focus.

### **What will this provide me?**

It will provide you with, you hope, a more stable life and, at the same time, new motivations for the future. As a visual artist, you don't really have a choice: the pull of art is always stronger than anything else. This happened with Gauguin, Van Gogh and many, many more artists. Art is our creative *lover*: and it is a lover with a very strong passion for beauty itself, and that never leaves us throughout our lives.

**Keep what you have already achieved**

Is this a goal in itself? Keep in mind *the tendency of expectations to increase* in capitalist society.

Think again if money is really the most important thing in your life. Keep your passion for art alive in your heart and mind.



## 6\_3. Achieve online /

### Offline time balance

#### **Make art**

This has to be your top priority. Continue to love art. When making art stops being a struggle and become a calm, therapeutic activity, then you know that you have found your personal style – this will be a life changing moment for you. Whether you find your inner *river of colours* like Paul Klee found on his famous *trip to Tunisia* or something completely different, the self-awareness of a

fully-developed artist is magical.

**How many hours a day should you spend online?**

The internet is a world of possibilities, no doubt about that, so contacts via email or Facebook are essential for your activity and they keep coming every minute - but it can also be an addiction and a waste of your precious time. Balancing online and offline time is essential for your well-being.

## **On which websites should I be?**

Choose the sites you want to work with very carefully. The right mix and the right amount of websites are crucial for you to be able to achieve your goals in the long term.

## **What will I be doing?**

Optimize the time you spend on these websites. Make it count. Don't waste your time and energy on activities that are not useful - adapt this advice to your internet approach.

6\_4. Choose what to sell, When to sell and at what price

**Sell originals (Y / N)**

Remember: as I have told you already, this is just one, unique sale: you lose the original forever. Yes, the price will be higher, but the artwork is no longer yours...

**Sell prints** (decide where, and at what price range)

Selling prints offers a more affordable price; however, interest in a copy of the original and not the *real thing* is lower. An advantage,

though: there is the possibility and ease of printing in several sizes and mediums. Hey – and you still have the original artwork!

### **Income tax**

Remember to take care of your tax declaration and to declare everything according to the rules of your country. Check the law and open an account with the tax office as a freelance artist.

### **Passive income**

This means that you can earn money even when you are sleeping!

You keep something online that everyone can buy, even years after you created it. It can be YouTube ads, affiliate links, online courses, images, and many more options. This is the perfect, Internet-era activity. You can use online e-learning websites like Udemy or Skillshare; or selling digital files and photos on Stock Photo sites as Shutterstock, Dreamstime, iStockPhoto and many others.

### **Art exhibitions**

I would advise you to contact art galleries, but only the ones where

the art styles exhibited are something you can relate to. Keep an open mind about craft fairs too, and try to organise your own exhibitions, without the *middle man* taking a huge commission from your art...

### **Shipping - hidden costs**

On Ebay and Etsy you have to deal with international shipping. It is very easy for United States residents, because the internal market is so huge, and most clients are already living there, but not so well tailored for foreigners, who will

have to deal with shipping costs, packaging materials and customs problems every time they send something to a buyer in the US.

In Saatchiart.com online gallery they address this essential aspect and it is the buyer who pays for this, and also there is a shipping company that takes you through the whole process. You can also install an online store on your site; however once again you will have to deal with all the bureaucracy of international shipping on your own.



## **Choosing the price of your works**

Well, there are two ways to look at this matter, which is an important issue in the art world.

The first, from the point of view of the market: what does the gallery owner think about the value of your work? What do other artists think? Who can advise you? What does your agent think about the real value of the canvas? What does the auctioneer think? And, of course, there are many other people's opinions to consider.

The big problem is that if you follow

this route you will always be either underestimating your work or overestimating it, depending on the space where it is shown and the person who is advising you about the right price for your artwork.

If you exhibit in a five star hotel, the price is through the roof; if you exhibit in a cheap restaurant, prices will have to be low; if you sell at auction you may get an inflated price; if you sell to a private person, you make a price 'for friends'.

Well, I propose three things,

instead:

**One:** Use your head!

**Two:** Try to always keep to the same price range.

**Three:** Put a price on your art that makes sense - not to others but that makes sense to you as an artist who is, after all, the author of these works...

There are many ways, many formulas to find the right price for a work of art. You will find some advice on fixing the price based on the size of the canvas and other

similar things that, frankly, don't make a lot of sense.

You can find lots of advice online, even from artists who have put videos on YouTube. I do not think it's a problem to watch these videos, but you have to take their advice with a pinch of salt, because often they are artists who are already well-known, who can speak from the *top of the hill*, so to speak; they don't have the problems that a beginner has in selling their art pieces at a lower price range.

Let's see how this is achievable in practice.

Well, when deciding on the price, for example of a painting on canvas, you have to take into account the following six factors:

**One.** The price of the materials: paint, brushes, canvases, even the rags and all the materials that were actually used to make this painting: about 50\$.

**Two.** Your work: here you have two options: to charge a single value; or

the price of work per hour, for example, if you took two hours and you charge 20\$ an hour, so 40\$ is then added to the final price.

**Three.** Did you take part in any exhibitions to try to sell this artwork? So all transportation and assembly costs should be reflected in the final price: let's say that you put it into two exhibitions , even if now, it is a private individual in your studio who is buying it, long after these two exhibitions are over: we will put a cost of 70\$.

**Four.** The cost of your creativity: remember that a work of art is unique; for a canvas over 80 by 60 centimetres I do not think it inappropriate to charge an artistic value of 200\$.

**Five.** The time it took to sell the painting. You may want the final price to reflect this time, say 30\$ for each year that has passed, since there is a cost of space and maintenance that you have for each individual canvas that you have made, that has not yet been sold. If it took 4 years to sell, it's 120\$.

Again, this value is up to you.

So we have here:

- . Materials: 50 \$;
- . Your work: 40 \$;
- . Exhibitions: 70 \$;
- . Creativity: 200\$;
- . Time to sell: 120\$;

: Total: 480\$

So, if you sell without commission to a private collector, I do not see a problem in selling in this price range.



Factor **Six**. Finally, there are the commissions that you have to pay to the gallery or the website or the restaurant, which can be around 50 percent in many places, so in order to get what you want, you may have to then double the price. So, the final price is 960\$, and that's close to a thousand - if you want to, make it **1000\$ - a thousand dollars**.

Sounds like a lot, doesn't it? And for a beginner artist it will be difficult, if not impossible, to get this same price in all situations

where the artwork is exhibited.

And yet, if for you it makes sense, this is a price that, most important of all, you can justify: if some hesitant buyer asks you how the *hell* did you come up with this price, you have to do one simple thing: print this list with this six point formula, and present it to the collector, so that he finally understands how an artist decides on a price for his canvas. Add this to the Certificate of Authenticity that usually goes along with the sale of the painting, and you will

have an informed buyer that finally understands why he has to pay this final price for the canvas he is buying.

You have nothing to hide and you say this: *my friend*, these are the costs, and therefore this is the price of the canvas.

If we, artists, maintain some rationality in this art world where the prices are so inflated for no apparent reason, we will gain three essential things, which we now lack:

**One.**The spirit of an artists' community

**Two.** The future will be built on our own terms, not the terms of the galleries.

**Three.** The respect of those who make money from our creativity and our work and also the respect of those who buy our art directly from us.

And that's it, that's all you will need for your artwork prices to start making sense.

And you will be also a legitimate artist.

6\_5. Achieve success on your own terms

So, **You are here now**

Evaluate your current situation carefully

And, **I was there before**

This is a view from yesterday, from the past

And, **I want to be in this place tomorrow**

Here, you have to set achievable, concrete goals

## **Again, I'm here now**

You must reassess the present moment

And, I want to **keep what I have** already achieved

So, **remember:**

. To dream, then do it.

. When you reach it, you have to keep it.

. After that, just set new goals all the time and reach them.

Keep this rhythm and attitude towards your creative activities.

Energy, passion, dream, and a practical view.

Hey: welcome:

**- You are an Artist !**





Bibliography /  
Recommended books

- . Art, Inc
- . Abstract art and Figurative art
- . XIX and XX th centuries` s art
- . Painting history
- . Ways of seeing
- . Pedagogical sketches
- . Concerning the spiritual in art



Francisco Capelo is a 46 year old Portuguese sociologist, art tutor and writer. He is passionate about the pedagogy of visual arts. This book is a summary of everything that a beginner artist needs to become a more complete human being.

Welcome to the passion of my life.

Welcome to Art !

[www.franciscocapelo.net](http://www.franciscocapelo.net)



